



PALMER

Hampden County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Palmer is made up of four separate and distinct villages; Depot Village, Thorndike Village, Three Rivers and Bondsville. There are four separate water districts, three separate fire departments and four separate village centers. In addition, there are some agricultural areas. The villages began to develop their distinctive characters in the 18th century, and by the 19th century when two rail lines and a trolley line opened the town to population growth, newcomers generally migrated to the village that appealed to them.

John King was the first settler in Palmer, building his home in 1716 on the banks of the Chicopee River. He was followed by a large group of Scottish-Irish Presbyterians who arrived and put down their roots in 1727. Depot Village has been the main commercial and business center for 125 years. Bondsville is the site of much of the town's industry, beginning in the 18th century when the first saw and grist mills were established. By 1825, textile production began in town with a woolen mill. The Blanchard Scythe Factory, Wright Wire Woolen Mills and the Holden-Fuller Woolen Mills developed major industrial capacity in Palmer and constructed a large amount of workers housing. By 1900 a company like Boston Duck which made heavy cotton fabric, had housed 500 employees in the town in workers housing which remains as part of the town fabric.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

South central Massachusetts, bordered by Monson on the south, Wilbraham and Ludlow on the west, Belchertown and Ware on the north, and Warren and Brimfield on the east. Palmer is 15 miles east of Springfield, 36 miles west of Worcester, 73 miles west of Boston, and 153 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 32.02 sq. miles

Land Area: 31.53 sq. miles

Population: 12,054

Density: 382 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(East Brimfield Lake Station)

Normal temperature in January.....21.5°F

Normal temperature in July.....70.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....45.0"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Palmer, Ludlow, Warren

Regional Planning Agency

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Springfield



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 283-2603

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen
Executive Secretary
Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1775

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	6,953		
Democrats	2,697	38.8	%
Republicans	679	9.8	%
Other parties	7	0.1	%
Unenrolled Voters	3,570	51.3	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Palmer town, Hampden County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	12,497	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	12,497	100.0
Male.....	6,099	48.3	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	154	1.2
Female.....	6,458	51.7	Mexican.....	15	0.1
Under 5 years.....	693	5.5	Puerto Rican.....	96	0.8
5 to 9 years.....	903	7.2	Cuban.....	8	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	977	7.8	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	35	0.3
15 to 19 years.....	865	6.9	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	12,343	98.8
20 to 24 years.....	558	4.5	White alone.....	12,024	96.2
25 to 34 years.....	1,599	12.8	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	2,216	17.7	Total population.....	12,497	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	1,747	14.0	In households.....	12,425	99.4
55 to 59 years.....	578	4.6	Householder.....	5,078	40.6
60 to 64 years.....	421	3.4	Spouse.....	2,462	19.7
65 to 74 years.....	914	7.3	Child.....	3,772	30.2
75 to 84 years.....	777	6.2	Own child under 18 years.....	2,920	23.4
85 years and over.....	249	2.0	Other relatives.....	468	3.7
Median age (years).....	38.1	(X)	Under 18 years.....	143	1.1
18 years and over.....	9,349	74.8	Nonrelatives.....	645	5.2
Male.....	4,401	35.2	Unmarried partner.....	343	2.7
Female.....	4,948	39.6	In group quarters.....	72	0.6
21 years and over.....	8,931	71.5	Institutionalized population.....	66	0.5
62 years and over.....	2,193	17.5	Noninstitutionalized population.....	6	-
65 years and over.....	1,940	15.5	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	726	5.8	Total households.....	5,078	100.0
Female.....	1,214	9.7	Family households (families).....	3,329	65.6
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	1,603	31.6
One race.....	12,348	98.8	Married-couple family.....	2,462	48.5
White.....	12,100	96.8	With own children under 18 years.....	1,098	21.6
Black or African American.....	94	0.8	Female householder, no husband present.....	623	12.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	29	0.2	With own children under 18 years.....	382	7.5
Asian.....	70	0.6	Nonfamily households.....	1,749	34.4
Asian Indian.....	15	0.1	Householder living alone.....	1,456	28.7
Chinese.....	38	0.3	Householder 65 years and over.....	658	13.0
Filipino.....	7	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	1,722	33.9
Japanese.....	2	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	1,419	27.9
Korean.....	4	-	Average household size.....	2.45	(X)
Vietnamese.....	1	-	Average family size.....	3.01	(X)
Other Asian ¹	3	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	5,402	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	5,078	94.0
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	324	6.0
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	31	0.6
Some other race.....	55	0.4	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	1.7	(X)
Two or more races.....	149	1.2	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	4.7	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	5,078	100.0
White.....	12,228	97.8	Owner-occupied housing units.....	3,322	65.4
Black or African American.....	123	1.0	Renter-occupied housing units.....	1,756	34.6
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	88	0.7	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.65	(X)
Asian.....	105	0.8	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.07	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	7	0.1			
Some other race.....	108	0.9			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	48
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	1
Federal (Section 8):	0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Located in the Worcester area, which has three major cross-state highways: the Worcester Turnpike (Route 9), Route 20, and the Massachusetts Turnpike. I-495 borders to the east, I-190 links to the Fitchburg-Leominster area, I-84 and I-395 connect to Connecticut and points south. The region is well connected by rail and highway to the ports, airports, and intermodal facilities of Boston and Providence.

Major Highways

Principal highways are the Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate Route 90) and U.S. Route 20, which run E-W across the state, and State Route 32 going N-S. One of the interchanges of the Massachusetts Turnpike is located in Palmer.

Rail

Palmer is an important node in the intermodal network that combines the advantages of long haul rail transportation with door-to-door delivery by highway. The Central Vermont Railway, Conrail, and the Massachusetts Central Railroad all serve the New England Intermodal Terminal and interchange cars at Palmer. Contact numbers: Central Vermont: (802) 527-3402; Conrail: (617) 783-6222; Massachusetts Central: (413) 283-2911

Bus

Palmer is not affiliated with a regional transit authority. Peter Pan Bus Lines provides service to Palmer on its main route between Springfield, Worcester, and Boston.

Other

Metropolitan Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located 4 mi N of Palmer, has a 2,475' x 55' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

Wing Memorial Hospital

Long Term Care

Palmer House Healthcare N.H.

Hospices

Quaboag Valley Hospice

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.